

## ENGAGING A SERVANT.

Odd Scenes That Are Enacted in Employment Agencies.

Man, Poor Man, Is Like a Fish Out of Water There.

The Woman with the Lorgnette Can Beat Him Out of Sight.

One thing nine men out of ten cannot do with even the smallest degree of success is to engage a house servant, be it cook or maid, that will prove satisfactory and acceptable to madam. The employment office is a veritable chamber of horror to the master of the house and he flees from it as from a wrath.



**IN THE EMPLOYMENT OFFICE.**  
The man of the house yields, if on no other point, undisputed sway to the misses in the matter of engaging house servants, and it is her exclusive task to do all the hiring—and undo it all, too, when unsatisfactory engagements are made by simply discharging Ellen, the cook, or Roberts, the maid. And how gracefully some of the Madonna-faced mistresses of extensive establishments do engage a waitress one day and replace her the next, with just the sweetest explanatory smile, as who would say: "Too bad, my girl, but you never will do in this house."



**COMPARING NOTES.**  
Not the least interesting places in this great metropolis are the employment agencies, where madams go to engage help. They are uncommonly fine places to study human nature in all its uniquely varying types. One can find comedy there, frivolye and cunctiously funny, and also the shadows of human woe and disappointments.

An EVENING WORLD reporter and an artist made a visit this morning to one of New York's largest employment bureaus. It is on Fourth Avenue, not a stone's throw from Madison Square Garden. The proprietor died a year ago after an experience of thirty-seven years in the more or less exciting occupation of furnishing "help" to the wealthy.

A line of smart-looking equipages, with solemn-faced conductmen and stuck-backed footmen, extended from in front of the office clear around the adjacent corner. Richly dressed, matronly women, some of whom carry carriages, had come in these vehicles in search of servants. A tall, patriarchal-looking man with an extremely bushy white beard of great length, welcomed them as the "boss" of the agency. He seemed to know many of them, and he was heard several times to make remarks to this effect: "Good morning, Mrs. So-and-so. Very sorry to hear that French cook, or that upstairs girl, or that maid, as the case might be, did not suit you. I have another in the back room. Will you be good enough to be seated for a few minutes?"

The apartment where the prospective employer of help waits to inspect the applicants for places is distinctly the "employer's room." It is so designed to big gilt letters on the bright blue window-shades, and books, chambermaids and laundresses are relegated to the rear behind a sequestered partition. A bubble of indistinguishable English waits over that partition, and every now and then you catch the sonorous patois of the volatile French bourse; the drollery of the Scotch or Irish maid or all work; the broad gestures of the easy-going, pugnacious German girls; or the sharp nasal twang of Jenny from Maine, who can bake biscuits "just like her mother, who took first prize at Rockwood County Fair."

The employer's room is crowded. All the snairs are occupied. Delicate perpines examined on all sides set one to thinking of palatially furnished drawing-rooms. There's

richness in the very air. There wasn't a young woman in all that gathering of emperors that morning. It was essentially an assembly of silver-crowned matrons, and for the most part they were seven or eight years beyond the age of marriage. There is talking on all sides in this room, too, and the sound of it all sounds something like this:

"It all sounds strong enough to move the kitchenmaid's work? So you worked at Mrs. Chamberlain's last for a year. Well, she has written a card, received it, and the name on it is Annie. You may call to see me tomorrow at half after 12, Annie."

All the while Annie, who may or may not be a picture—most modest little thing imaginable, stands blushingly in front of her new mistress and tries to look really pleased at the idea of going into service with such a person.

"There is a sudden hurry and bustle, and a round-faced, youthfull man, whose head is woolly-headed, steps in behind the partition and bows to about four.

"Come, now, we have chambermaids who want to go to the country. Come up and give me your names. I'll write them down with the others. I'll get you a room with the twenty chambermaids. I have already hired fifteen and if you five want to go just say you're quits. You'll be all right in a long seashore place, too. All right, I've got your name, and yours, and yours, and yours. You will start Monday."

The jolliest-looking stout man is positively out of breath when he once more seats himself for a moment in the outer apartment.

"This is the busiest time of the year with

the girls, and you're the busiest of all."

The jolly agent approached the reporter again. "We have our 20,000 girls in the course of a year," said he, "and, of course, we have all kinds of good, bad, and, of course, that are average. There's going to be a time as we call it, and after a while we return to secure employment for them. The girls pay a dollar a week, and we do the same. We charge a rate, oftentimes sending them to three or four places. Some girls never will suit a housekeeper, and on the other hand, here are girls who are perfect. These are the girls that a perfect angel of a servant wouldn't satisfy him."

You just watch some of these high-toned women as they cross-examine the girls. That'll give you a pretty good idea how exacting mistresses are. They make me tired sometimes, and I don't wonder that the top of the world is a high place. I've been here twenty-two years and think I've been lucky to be on earth.

"A man will take the first girl he sees, and the girls come back to us again within a week. He doesn't ask questions, but holy smoke! his wife will cross-examine that girl sharper than a tomb's court law, you know. And then there's a man who has an license to mix in in the servant-girl-living end of his establishment."

Wilson Barrett's plan as now arranged are to open on Monday at the Theatre Royal, Nottingham, and he will play in the provinces until Oct. 15, when he will give a farewell performance at the Court Theatre, Liverpool. On Oct. 19 he and his company hope to sail for America.

After appearing with his company in all the American cities Mr. Barrett will proceed along to San Francisco to fulfil an engagement at the Stockwell Theatre, where he will be supported by a California company, his own having in the mean time returned to England.

All the old pieces that have pleased English audiences will be played during this visit to America, as well as two new ones which Mr. Barrett has arranged to produce. One of these is an adaptation by Mr. Hall Calme and Mr. Barrett of "The Bondman," the other is entitled "My Pleasant Star."

Mr. Barrett has engaged John R. Rogers, husband of Miss Minnie Palmer, as his manager.

Miss Agnes Hart, daughter of Dean Hart, of Denver, Col., who has been studying in London for several years, made a successful debut in concert at the Portman Rooms on Monday. In criticism on her programme the *Times* commends her tasteful and intelligent singing.

On Thursday Sir Arthur Sullivan directed the choral rehearsal for the Music Festival at Teddington. This was the first work he has done since his illness. He looked pale and weak. He was given a rousing reception.

Rubinstein has definitely cancelled his contract to make a tour in the United States. Col. the Hon. Fred Wellesley, Kate Vaughan's husband, has been committed at Wimborne to fourteen days imprisonment for being in arrears £34 on the taxes on his house.

John A. Campbell, the stoveman, has a push-shop at 55 Oak street. It is only a short time since he moved there. Formerly his emporium of universal supplies was at 54, across the way. He was doing a flourishing business and was beginning to think "full surely his greatness was a-rising" when along came a killing frost in the guise of Samuel Solerwitz, "slipping the root" of Campbell's leeks by offering a higher rental and landing Campbell adrift upon a sea of trouble by getting him evicted.

For awhile Campbell's bazaar was in mighty peril of being carted away by the Street-Cleaning Department, but he finally succeeded in renting a store at No. 55, where he is now fitting out his armaments for the Inter-junkal war.

And solerwitz?

Ah, Solerwitz!

He has opened an establishment at No. 84 similar to that of Campbell that one would almost expect the respective proprietors to be locked in mutual embrace of fraternal love.

But fate has willed it differently. Campbell has constituted himself an avenging Nighthawk and has plundered around in conspicuous places this prevalence of Solerwitz to bequeath to him the name of "Solerwitz."

The greater hawks the fort across the way.

"Look at this and then at that."

"We don't sell stolen goods."

"We don't buy our bread by the yard."

"We don't burn our store."

"We have no dealings with crooked crooks."

"Our shopkeepers are not filled with soot."

"Hurray, the Campbells are coming!"

Solerwitz bore the taunts meekly until patience ceased to be a virtue, and then he took a blow at the other just as hard as Campbell's. He never lived on nine cents a day, but I'll make that fellow's bones a-tremble.

"I'm not going to let him get away."

They squared off for battle.

They squared off for battle.